

REMARKS

The specification of the subject U.S. patent application, as filed, as constituted by the verified translation of PCT/EP2004/050658, has been cancelled in favor of the concurrently submitted Substitute Specification. A suitable Abstract of the Disclosure has been added. These changes and additions do not constitute any new matter.

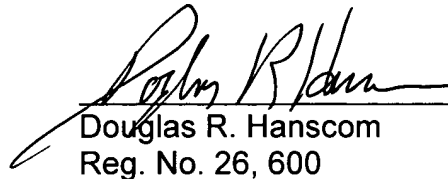
Original claims 1-54, Article 34 claims 1-51 and further Article 34 claims 1-50 have all been cancelled. New claims 55-103 have been added. New claims 55-103 are essentially the same, in scope, as the claims which are pending in the corresponding PCT application. They have been rewritten more in a form in accordance with U.S. practice and eliminating multiple dependencies.

Entry of this Preliminary Amendment into the file of the subject U.S. patent application, prior to the calculation of the filing fee, and prior to an examination of the application on the merits, is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Stefan Arthur BUDACH
Volker LOHWEG
Bernd Rüdiger STÖBER
Harald Heinrich WILLEKE
Applicants

JONES, TULLAR & COOPER, P.C.
Attorneys for Applicant



Douglas R. Hanscom
Reg. No. 26, 600

October 31, 2005
JONES, TULLAR & COOPER, P.C.
P.O. Box 2266 Eads Station
Arlington, Virginia 22202
(703) 415-1500
Attorney Docket: W1.2036 PCT-US

MARKED-UP COPY OF SPECIFICATION
W1.2036 PCT-US: BUDACH ET AL.

[Specification]

**DEVICES FOR CONTROLLING AT LEAST ONE REGISTER IN A PRINTING
MACHINE**

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[001] This application is the U.S. national phase, under 35 USC 371, of
PCT/EP2004/050658, filed April 30, 2004; published as WO 2004/096546 A1 on
November 11, 2004, and claiming priority to DE 103 19 770.2, filed May 2, 2003,
the disclosures of which are expressly incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[002] The present invention is directed[relates] to devices for regulating at least
one register in a printing press[in accordance with the preamble of claim 1, 3 or 5]
The printing press includes at least one printing group with a forme cylinder, a
transfer cylinder and a counter-pressure cylinder. An image sensor records an
image of an imprinted substrate.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[003] A device for parallel image inspection and color regulation of a printed

[WO 2004/096546]

[PCT/EP2004/050658]

product, which is produced in a printing press with at least one printing group, is known from DE 43 21 177 A1. An[, wherein an] image detection arrangement is provided, which forwards image data from the printed product to a computer arrangement. The[, wherein the] image detection arrangement consists of one or of several measuring modules, each of which scans a defined image area of the printed product, and of at least one associated receiving device, which creates the image data and which preferably is spatially separated from the measuring modules. The[, wherein the] measuring modules and the at least one receiving device are connected with each other by [means of]at least one image conductor. A[, wherein a] register sensor is also [additionally]provided, and by the use[means] of which, a register measurement can be performed at the imprinted printed product.

[004] A color registration system for a printing press is known from EP 0 598 490

A1. A[, wherein a] computer, with a camera or with a group of cameras, determines an erroneous alignment of colors of a printed product by comparing an actual image with a stored reference image, and, by the use[means] of a printing

[WO 2004/096546]

[PCT/EP2004/050658]

control₁ aligns [a]longitudinal, transverse and rotary positions₂ of cylinders of a printing press in relation to a web, which web is moved through the printing press and is to be imprinted. The alignment is done, in such a way that the cylinders create a multi-color image with colors which are correctly aligned with each other.

[005] A device and a method for the register-maintaining matching of printing cylinders of a web-fed rotary printing press is known from EP 0 882 588 A1. A, wherein a] first cylinder, which is imprinting one side of the web₁ is driven by a first motor, and a second cylinder, which is also imprinting the same side of the web₁ is driven by a second motor. The[, and the] angular position of the second cylinder is matched by a regulator to maintain registration with the first cylinder. Register[, wherein register] markings, which are imprinted on the web by the cylinders₁ [on the web]are recorded by a sensor that is arranged downstream of the last cylinder in the production direction, which sensor may be, for example₁ a CCD camera. The register markings[, and] are evaluated as guide values for the regulator by the use[means] of characteristic lines.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[006] The object of the present invention is directed to[based on] providing devices for regulating at least one register in a printing press.

[007] In accordance with the present invention, the object is attained by[means of devices having the characteristics of claim 1, 3 or 5] the provision of a printing press having at least one printing group with at least one forme cylinder, one transfer cylinder and one counter-pressure cylinder. An image sensor records an image of an imprinted substrate which has been printed in color. That image is evaluated in an evaluating unit. The evaluating unit generates an actuating signal to an actuating drive mechanism for regulating the register. The data provided to the evaluating unit is compared to data from a previously recorded image. The evaluation unit separates the image into its color components. Each forme cylinder has its own separate, independently controlled drive motor.

[008] The advantages which can be attained by [means of]the present invention reside₁ in particular₁ in that it is possible₁ [by means of]providing images of the entire imprinting substrate width₁ to simultaneously obtain several data₁ for use in

regulating the printing process₁ in a single evaluating unit. Also, [no]separate types of sensors₁ with associated separate evaluating units₁ are not required for the various regulating paths in the printing press. Instead[, instead], the image sensor alone provides the data which is required for several parameters which are relevant to the printing process in the printing press and which can be influenced by control systems, such as adjusting the supply of ink or dampening agent, or the registration or registers, for example. This[, which] has advantageous effects on the costs for setting up and for maintaining the regulating system, as well as on the speed of reaction, such as, for example, in the case of detected deviations from the regulation. The[Thus, the] above-mentioned parameters₁ which are relevant to the printing process₁ can [be]simultaneously be controlled by a single regulating device having an image sensor and only one evaluating unit. The parameters[, and] can be corrected₁ if needed₁ which correction, because of the rapid intervention and regulating possibilities it provides, contributes to keeping the amount of waste in the printing process low and to the assurance of[assure] a high production quality over the entire printing process. By the use[means] of the

integral detection and the evaluation of the data in a single evaluating unit or computing device, the[their] logging of the data, and the documentation of the quality of the printed products going hand-in-hand with it, as well as statistic analyses regarding the printing process, are made easier. This is because of the omission of interface problems which otherwise would have to be solved.

An[Since preferably an] image of every produced printed piece is recorded, a check of individual pieces takes place, [and]not only a spot check. Accordingly, a 100% check is accomplished[results] during the printing process, so that[wherein] printed copies, that are lacking in quality, can be removed or at least can be marked. Separate register markings, test fields or print control strips, which are applied to the imprinting substrate in addition to the actual printed image, are not required for regulating the color density of a color applied to the imprinting substrate by the printing press, or for checking that the register of the printed image is maintained. This[, which] is advantageous, because for one, such register markings require additional space on the material to be imprinted. Those[, and also] register markings also only provide [only]an indirect reference to the

actual position of the color components, with[in] respect to each other, which color components, in their totality, constitute the printed image.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

[009] A preferred[An exemplary] embodiment of the present invention is represented in the sole drawing[s] figure and will be described in greater detail in what follows.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[010] In a greatly simplified representation, and by way of example, the sole[single] drawing figure shows four aligned[lined-up] printing groups 01, 02, 03, 04 of an offset rotary printing press. Each of the printing groups includes[, each with] a forme cylinder 06, 07, 08, 09, a transfer cylinder 11, 12, 13, 14, and a counter-pressure cylinder 16, 17, 18, 19. Every[, wherein every] counter-pressure cylinder 16, 17, 18, 19 is preferably also embodied as a transfer cylinder, for use in producing printed products, which are imprinted on both sides, and thus works together with a forme cylinder, which is [(not specifically represented)], that is assigned to it. An imprinting substrate 21, such as, for example, a printing sheet

21 or a web 21 of material, and preferably a paper web 21, is passed between the transfer cylinder 11, 12, 13, 14 and the counter-pressure cylinder 16, 17, 18, 19 in the course of the printing process and is imprinted with at least one printed image.

It is immaterial, for purposes of the present invention, whether the printing groups 01, 02, 03, 04 are arranged in such a way that the imprinting substrate is conducted horizontally or vertically through the printing press.

[011] An image sensor 22, such as, for example, a color camera 22, and preferably a digital semiconductor camera 22, which is provided with at least one CCD chip, is preferably arranged at the outlet of the last printing group 04 in a[the] transport direction of the imprinting substrate 21 through[of] the printing press. An[, and with its] image-taking area of the image sensor 22 is preferably directed immediately and directly onto the imprinting substrate 21. An[, wherein the] image-taking area of the image sensor 22 takes in at least the entire width of the imprinting substrate 21, wherein this entire[the] width of the imprinting substrate 21 extends transversely to the[its] transport direction of substrate 21 through the printing press. Thus, the image sensor 22 detects an image of an[the] entire width

of the imprinted paper web 21, which image can be electronically evaluated, and wherein at least one printed image has been applied to the imprinting substrate 21 along the width of the paper web 21. The image sensor 22 is embodied, for example, as an area camera 22.

[012] The image sensor 22 transmits [the]data, which is correlated with the recorded image to a suitable evaluating unit 23, which, in particular, may be a program-controlled electronic computer arrangement 23, which computer 23 is arranged, for example, in a control console that[which] is a part of the printing press. Parameters that are relevant to the printing process can now be checked by the use[means] of an analysis which is performed in the evaluating unit 23 and, if required, these parameters can be corrected automatically, so to speak, by the use[means] of programs which are run in the evaluating unit 23. The evaluation and correction of all of the parameters which are relevant to the printing process, takes place [here]practically simultaneously by the use[means] of the same evaluating unit 23. In particular, the image which is detected by the image sensor 22 in the course of the running production of the printing press, and which is

transferred₁ in the form of a data flow₁ to the evaluating unit 23 is evaluated to determine whether the printed image, which was actually recorded as the picture and which was evaluated, shows a change in, for example, the shading value in comparison with a previously recorded and evaluated printed image, such as, in particular₁ an increase in the shading value. In other words, [i.e.] an actually recorded image is checked during the running process by comparison with a reference image. If the result of the check is a detection of a change in the shading value, which change is, [i.e.] as a rule₁ a technically unavoidable increase in the shading value, the metering and/or the supply of ink to the printing press is changed by the use [means] of at least one first actuating command emanating from the evaluating unit 23. The at least one first activating command is, [] conducted via a [the] data line 24 and acts [acting] on at least one of the printing groups 01, 02, 03, 04. The [to the] effect is that the shading change becomes minimal by the control of the application of ink following the actually checked image. After the regulation of the color density, which is performed following the change in metering and/or supply of ink, the color impression of an image

following the actually recorded picture of a printed image again corresponds better to a previously taken picture of a printed image, such as, a[i.e. the] reference image. The control and the regulation of the shading change are[is] important for keeping the color balance, or the gray balance, and therefore also for keeping the color impression of the produced printed products, as constant as possible, typically[- possibly] within permissible tolerance limits[-], which constitutes an important quality feature in connection with printed products.

[013] The data flow, that is generated from the recording of the printed image and that is transmitted to the evaluating unit 23, is employed in the same way for checking the maintenance of the registration of the printed image applied to the imprinting substrate 21, and in particular, is used for checking and, if required, for the correction of a color registration of a printed image which is produced by multi-color printing. At least one register, which preferably is adjustable by the use[means] of a motor, is provided in the printing press, and may be, for example, a circumferential register or a lateral register. This register can[,] if required, be a diagonal shifting device for shifting at least one of the forme cylinders 06, 07, 08,

[WO 2004/096546]

[PCT/EP2004/050658]

09, with[in] respect to the transfer cylinder 11, 12, 13, 14 that is assigned to it. As[, wherein, as] a function of this check, the register is regulated by the use[means] of the at least one actuating command that is emanating from the evaluating unit 23, which transmitted via a data line 26 and which acts[acting] on at least one of the printing groups 01, 02, 03, 04 to the effect that the greatest possible registration accuracy results for a printed image following the recordation of the evaluated image. Setting or adjustment of the registers is thus calculated by the evaluating unit 23 based on[from] the image data which was made available to it by the image sensor 22 of the evaluating unit 23. It is also possible₁ by [means of]the proper setting or adjustment of the lateral registration₁ to counteract a transverse stretching which is caused by fan-out. This[, wherein this] transverse stretching occurs₁ in particular₁ in printing presses having a so-called eight-tower structure of their printing groups.

[014] Preferably₁ the printing press is embodied [to be]without shafts. In such a printing press₁ the forme cylinders 06, 07, 08, 09 preferably each have individual drive mechanisms, which are mechanically decoupled from the drive mechanisms

[WO 2004/096546]

[PCT/EP2004/050658]

for the counter-pressure cylinders 16, 17, 18, 19. Accordingly, [, so that] the phase relation or the angular relation of the forme cylinders 06, 07, 08, 09, with[in] respect to the counter-pressure cylinders 16, 17, 18, 19, can be changed by an appropriate control or regulation, preferably of the drive mechanisms of the forme cylinders 06, 07, 08, 09, whenever an evaluation of the image of the imprinting substrate 21, by use[means] of the image sensor 22, makes this appear necessary. The entire image content of the imprinting substrate 21, not just[only] individual, locally limited image elements of that[the] imprinting substrate 21, such as the reference markers, for example, or the like[similar], therefore affects the control or the regulation of the printing group, and in particular the control or the regulation of the drive mechanisms of the forme cylinders 06, 07, 08, 09.

[015] An actuating command, which is generated by the evaluating unit 23, on the basis of the image contents of the picture taken of the printed image, acts on a control device or on a regulating device of an electric motor, which electric motor is preferably a position-controlled one, and which is utilized for the rotatory driving, during printing, of at least one of the forme cylinders 06, 07, 08, 09, the transfer

cylinder 11, 12, 13, 14 assigned to it, or the counter-pressure cylinder 16, 17, 18, 19. In this way, the drive mechanism of the forme cylinder 06, 07, 08, 09, in particular, or of the transfer cylinder 11, 12, 13, 14 that is assigned to this forme cylinder 06, 07, 08, 09, in one of the printing groups 01, 02, 03, 04 of the printing press can be controlled or regulated, preferably by electrical signals. Such control is accomplished[,] independently of a control of the drive mechanism of the forme cylinder 06, 07, 08, 09, or of the transfer cylinder 11, 12, 13, 14 assigned to this forme cylinder 06, 07, 08, 09, in another one of the printing groups 01, 02, 03, 04 of the printing press. In[, in] particular, by use of such control, it is [it] possible to set the mutual angular relation or the phase relation of the forme cylinders 06, 07, 08, 09 or of their associated[assigned] transfer cylinders 11, 12, 13, 14, which are involved in the printing of the printed products, or in forming[i.e.] the printed image, and which are arranged in different printing groups 01, 02, 03, 04 of the printing press. By use of[, by means of] the associated control device or regulating device, such as, for example, the evaluating unit 23, it is possible to maintain a registration which is suitable for producing the printed product. The electric motor

of the forme cylinder 06, 07, 08, 09 is preferably arranged coaxially with[in] respect to the axis of the forme cylinder 06, 07, 08, 09. The[, wherein the] rotor of the motor is preferably rigidly connected with a journal of the shaft of the forme cylinder 06, 07, 08, 09 in the manner described in DE 43 22 744 A1. The counter-pressure cylinders 16, 17, 18, 19, which are arranged in the various printing groups 01, 02, 03, 04 of the printing press can, in a manner such as is described in EP 0 812 683 A1, for example, be mechanically connected with each other by a train of gear wheels, for example, and can have a common drive mechanism, for example. However[, wherein, however], the forme cylinder 06, 07, 08, 09, or the associated transfer cylinder 11, 12, 13, 14, remain disconnected with[in] regard to their drive mechanisms, from their associated counter-pressure cylinder 16, 17, 18, 19. A coupling, such as, for example, by the use[means] of gear wheels in engagement with each other, can exist between the forme cylinder 06, 07, 08, 09, and the transfer cylinder 11, 12, 13, 14 which is assigned to it, so that the forme cylinder 06, 07, 08, 09, and the transfer cylinder 11, 12, 13, 14 which is assigned to it, are driven by the same drive mechanism. The control device or the

regulating device of the drive mechanisms of at least the forme cylinders 06, 07, 08, 09 is integrated in the evaluating unit 23, for example.

[016] The control or the regulation of the phase relation or of the angular relation of the forme cylinders 06, 07, 08, 09 with[in] respect to the counter-pressure cylinders 16, 17, 18, 19, takes place with[in] respect to a fixed reference setting, so that the forme cylinder 06, 07, 08, 09 can have a leading relation or a trailing relation with[in] respect to the counter-pressure cylinder 16, 17, 18, 19 assigned to it. The[, wherein the] relation of the rotation of the forme cylinder 06, 07, 08, 09 and the counter-pressure cylinder 16, 17, 18, 19 which is assigned to it, is set as a function of the image content of the image recorded by the image sensor 22, and is also updated by the control device or by the regulating device of their drive mechanisms. It is possible, in the same way, to control or to regulate the phase relation or the angular relation of forme cylinders 06, 07, 08, 09, which are arranged downstream of each other in the printing process, in respect to a fixed reference setting, which control or regulation is of particular importance in connection with multi- color printing of printed matter that is printed according to

colors in printing groups 01, 02, 03, 04 of the printing press, which printing groups are arranged one behind the other. If it becomes apparent from an evaluation of the picture of the printed image, which printed image preferably has several colors, that a correction is required of one color used in one of the printing groups 01, 02, 03, 04, the evaluation unit 23 issues its actuating command, which counteracts the detected interference effects, to the respective printing group 01, 02, 03, 04.

[017] If the actuating drives, which are to be regulated by the evaluating unit 23, by the issuance[means] of actuating commands, such as, for example, the actuating drives for regulating the supply of ink or of the dampening agent, as well as the drive mechanisms for regulating the circumferential register or the lateral register, are connected to a data network which is connected with the evaluating unit 23, the data lines 24, 26, which are provided for transmitting the first and second actuating commands, are preferably realized by the data network.

[018] The checking of a shading value change occurring during the printing process, and the check for maintaining registration are performed in the

evaluating unit 23 by the use[means] of parallel data processing, and are advantageously performed simultaneously. These two checks are preferably performed continuously [performed]during the running printing process, and in particular advantageously at the end of the printing process and also for each individual, produced printed copy.

[019] Initially, the check for maintaining registration relates to a congruent agreement of the position of the printed image or of the printed area between recto and perfecting printing, or [also]between the top and the underside when producing printing products imprinted on both sides. The[But the] check also includes, for example, a check of the register, such as[i.e.] the check of the intended accuracy which individual partial colors have when printed on top of each other during multi-color printing. The registration accuracy, as well as the register accuracy, both play an important role in multi-color printing.

[020] An illuminating device 27, such as, for example, a flash lamp 27, is advantageously assigned to the image sensor 22. Brief[, wherein brief] light flashes which are emanating from the flash lamp 27 make rapidly progressing

movement actions, such as the printing process represents, appear to stand still by the performance[means] of a stroboscopic method, and in this way make the imprinted substrate image[it] observable to the human eye. With a sheet-fed printing press in particular, the recording of the printed image, that is performed by [means of]the image sensor₁, can also take place in₁ or at a delivery device 28 of the printing press, which is shown in the drawing figure by a dashed representation of the image sensor 22 and the associated illuminating device 27 as a possible option for recording the printed image downstream of the last printing group 04 of the respective printed side, or at the end of the printing press. By [means of]an appropriate selection of the image sensor 22, and possibly also of the associated illuminating device 27, it is possible to extend the recording of the image into a virtually non-visible range, such as, for example, into the infrared or the ultraviolet range, [for example,]or displace it into them. As an alternative to the preferred utilization of an area camera 22 with a flash lamp 27, the employment of a line camera with a permanent illuminating device is also possible.

[WO 2004/096546]

[PCT/EP2004/050658]

[021] Since [preferably] every printed copy is preferably subjected to a check, a trend can be recognized, in the continuing printing process, or[i.e.] during continued printing, toward a shading value change and well as in the maintenance of the registration of sequentially produced printed copies. Depending on the value of their shading and/or their associated registration, which is detected during the running printing process, the printed copies can be classified into groups of different quality stages and can be marked as waste copies when they are[upon] exceeding a permissible tolerance limit. Waste copies can be specifically removed by the evaluating unit 23 or, particularly[in particular] in connection with a sheet-fed printing press, can at least be placed on a separate deposit stack 29 in the delivery device 28. To this end, at least one third actuating command, such as, for example, a waste signal, is issued by the evaluating unit 23 which is evaluating the image and is conducted over a data line 31 to at least one actuating drive that is acting on at least one arrangement for transporting the imprinted substrate 21 and for sorting the flow of copies.

[022] To synchronize[For synchronizing] the frequency at which the recording of

images on the imprinted substrate 21 takes place₁ with the transport speed of the imprinted substrate 21, such as₁[i.e.] for example₁ the speed of the paper web 21, an angle encoder 32 has been installed in at least one of the printing groups 01, 02, 03, 04, and preferably in that printing group 01, 02, 03, 04 in or at which the recording of the images₁ by the operation[means] of the image sensor 22 takes place. The[, wherein the] operating angle encoder 32 has a fixed ratio with[in] respect to the number of revolutions of that one of the transfer cylinders₁ 11, 12, 13, 14 at which the image sensor 22 records the images. The angle encoder 32 provides its output signal to the evaluating unit 23 and/or also to the image sensor 22. Among other things[Inter alia], the output signal of the angle encoder 32 is employed as the trigger for the flash lamp 27.

[023] The image that is recorded by the image sensor 22 and which is conducted₁ in the form of a data flow₁ to the evaluating unit 23₁ is preferably displayed on a monitor of an input and output unit 33, which is connected with the evaluating unit 23 and which performs a bi-directional data exchange. The input and output unit 33 also provides correction options for at least one of the above-

[WO 2004/096546]

[PCT/EP2004/050658]

mentioned regulating devices in that it makes possible a manual input and/or the triggering of at least one actuating command.

[024] The evaluating unit 23 has a memory device 34, which is used, among other things,[inter alia] for the storage of recorded image sequences, as well as for the storage of data which are useful for logging and for the simultaneous documentation of the quality of the printed products, as well as for conducting statistical analyses of the printing process. It is advantageous if the evaluating unit 23 can make the data which are evaluated and/or stored in it available to a company network by [means of]an appropriate connector 36.

[025] For a[the] comparison, which is performed by the evaluating unit 23, of data, which is[are] correlated with an image actually recorded in the course of the running production of the printing press, with [the]data from a previously generated image, [it can be provided that]the data from the previously recorded image can be[are] correlated with an image which is recorded in a pre-printing stage that is arranged upstream of the printing press. A[, wherein a] data processing arrangement of the pre-printing stage, which is [()not specifically

represented()), is connected with the evaluating unit 23 and provides the data of the previously generated image to the evaluating unit 23. In this way, the data of the previously generated image is[are] generated alternatively or in addition[additionally] to the data which is[are] correlated with an image recorded by the image sensor 22 and are made available to the evaluating unit 23. For[In] comparison with data obtained in the running production of the previously imprinted images, data from the pre-printing stage, and which is correlated with the printed image, constitute the better reference data for the control or regulation of the color register.

[026] The [proposed]device in accordance with the present invention allows a register regulation and a color regulation on the basis of an analysis of the same image recorded with the image sensor 22. The[, in that the] picture of the printed image is evaluated with[in] regard to different parameters which are relevant to the printing process in a single evaluating unit 23, as well as simultaneously undergoing an inspection of the printed image for judging the quality of the printed matter.

[027] In this case, a register measurement in the printed image is the basis for the register regulation. After all of the colors which are required for the printed image have been imprinted, the entire printed image is recorded by the camera or image sensor 22, preferably at the outlet of the printing press. A dissection of the recorded printed image takes place in the evaluating unit 23, preferably into the various color components CMYK which are customary in printing technology, as well as an analysis of suitable portions of the printed image and a relative position determination of a color component. With[in] respect to a reference color component by the use[means] of correlation methods with a previously recorded or obtained printed reference image.

[028] The reference image is obtained, for example, either from the pre-printing stage, which has the advantage that the reference image is already available in the individual color components, or a reference image, such as, for example, a printed sheet containing the printed image and obtained from a proof of the printed image, is used for the evaluation. This[, wherein this] reference image must [additionally] still also be separated into the color components. This

reference sheet is recorded after the printed image has been manually adjusted once in such a way that all of the printed printing colors are correctly positioned in relation to each other and₁ in this way₁ a proper color register has been set. This printed reference image, which is obtained in this way₁ can be stored for later repeat orders. In[, so that in] case of a repeated order₁ this previously recorded reference image can be accessed. By [means of]assessing the stored printed reference image₁ it is also possible for the evaluating unit 23 to set the color register automatically without manual intervention which, in case of a repeat order, leads to a further reduction in[of] waste.

[029] Characteristic and suitable portions of the printed reference image are selected, by the use[means] of which₁ the position of the individual color components with[in] respect to the reference color component₁ is determined. This is the so- called desired position for the subsequent register comparison. This reference image, including the color components and the desired position, is stored in the memory device 34, for example. The selection of the suitable printed image portion can take place either manually by the operator or automatically by

the evaluating unit 23, such as, for example, by pre-setting the desired position.

Areas in which the printing ink to be measured dominates or appears exclusively are suitable printed image portions with[in] regard to the register measurement.

[030] Each printed image is recorded during the running printing process, or during a[i.e.] continuous printing process, by use[means] of the camera system, and is separated into the color components CMYK. Now, the position of the individual color components within the previously selected suitable printed image portions is determined. This takes place by a comparison of the printed image with the color components from the printed reference image, such as, for example, by the use[means] of a correlation method, and in particular by a cross-correlation method. It is possible, by use[means] of the correlation method, to determine the position of the color components within approximately 1 pixel of the camera resolution. If a stationary register offset is repeatedly determined for each printed sheet, a high degree of accuracy of the measured value is assured by the suppression of stochastic scattering.

[031] The determination of the position of the individual color components takes

place₁ in the web running direction₁ in accordance with the longitudinal register, and takes place₁ in the transverse direction in respect to the web running direction₁ in accordance with the lateral register. The position differences, which are obtained in this way₁ are converted by the evaluating unit 23 into actuating commands and are transmitted as correction signals to the adjusting system, such as, for example,[i.e.] the drive mechanisms.

[032] In the field of offset printing₁ special colors are not mixed with the standard colors, typically[i.e.] the scale colors CMYK, but are printed separately. Therefore₁ special colors are also separately measured. First₁ it is necessary to determine the areas in which special colors are to be printed. Now₁ their own suitable areas are fixed for each special color, in which areas the position of the color component is determined in the same way as was done for the scale colors CMYK, or[i.e.] the standard colors. The further procedure for register regulation₁ in connection with special colors₁ is identical to the previously described procedure for standard colors.

[033] While a preferred embodiment of devices for controlling at least one

[WO 2004/096546]

[PCT/EP2004/050658]

register in a printing machine, in accordance with the present invention, has been set forth fully and completely hereinabove, it will be apparent to one of skill in the art that various changes in, for example, the specific type of substrate being printed, the structure of the delivery device, and the like could be made without departing from the true spirit and scope of the present invention which is accordingly to be limited only by the appended claims.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

[List of Reference Symbols

- 01 Printing group
- 02 Printing group
- 03 Printing group
- 04 Printing group
- 05 -
- 06 Forme cylinder
- 07 Forme cylinder
- 08 Forme cylinder
- 09 Forme cylinder
- 10 -
- 11 Transfer cylinder
- 12 Transfer cylinder
- 13 Transfer cylinder
- 14 Transfer cylinder
- 15 -
- 16 Counter-pressure cylinder, transfer cylinder
- 17 Counter-pressure cylinder, transfer cylinder
- 18 Counter-pressure cylinder, transfer cylinder
- 19 Counter-pressure cylinder, transfer cylinder
- 20 -
- 21 Imprinting substrate, printed sheet, web of
 material, paper web
- 22 Image sensor, color camera, area camera,
 semiconductor camera
- 23 Evaluating unit, computing device
- 24 Data line
- 25 -
- 26 Data line
- 27 Illuminating device, flash lamp
- 28 Delivery device]

[WO 2004/096546]

[PCT/EP2004/050658]

- [29 Deposit stack
- 30 -
- 31 Data line
- 32 Angle encoder
- 33 Input and output unit
- 34 Memory
- 35 -
- 36 Connector to a company network]